

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY SEOUL

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

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SUBJ: THIRD AND FOURTH NUCLEAR PLANTS

REF: SEOUL 8681

1. ARGUMENTS FAVORING ENRICHED URANIUM REACTORS ARE
THE FOLLOWING:

A. ENRICHED URANIUM TYPE POWER REACTORS HAVE BROADER BASE
SUCCESSFUL OPERATING EXPERIENCE THAN DO NATURAL URANIUM
POWER REACTORS OR ANY OTHER TYPE. IN NUCLEAR POWER PROGRAMS
AROUND WORLD LIGHT WATER REACTORS FUELED WITH ENRICHED
URANIUM HAVE DOMINATED WORLD MARKET LARGELY BECAUSE BROAD
BASE OF PROVEN CONSTRUCTING AND OPERATING EXPERIENCE,
ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS AND RELIABLE AVAILABILITY OF EN-
RICHED URANIUM FUEL.

B. U.S. REACTOR SUPPLIERS HAVE LARGER INVENTORY SPARE PARTS
THAN DO MANUFACTURERS OF NATURAL URANIUM REACTORS.

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C. AS FOR SUPPLY ENRICHED URANIUM, U.S. HAS HISTORICALLY

DEMONSTRATED ITS RELIABILITY AS SUPPLIER AND FOREIGN TOLL ENRICHING HAS BEEN MADE AVAILABLE ON ESSENTIALLY SAME BASIS AS PROVIDED U.S. UTILITIES. FURTHERMORE AEC HAS STATED ITS INTENTION TO SEE THERE IS NO SHORTFALL IN ENRICHING CAPACITY OF FUEL NUCLEAR POWER PROGRAMS OF ITSELF AND FRIENDS. IN ADDITION TO U.S., SOVIETS CURRENTLY OFFERING ENRICHING SERVICES AND GROUPS IN EUROPE, CANADA AND SOUTH AFRICA PLANNING SUCH FACILITIES. INDEED IF ALL PLANNED FACILITIES WERE BUILT THERE WOULD BE CONSIDERABLE OVER-CAPACITY AND COMPETITION COULD BE EXPECTED BE KEEN.

D. KOREANS MAY NOT HAVE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION PRESENT SHORT SUPPLY OF HEAVY WATER. U.S. HAS NO PLANS PRODUCE HEAVY WATER FOR EXPORT TO FOREIGN POWER REACTORS AND, HENCE, KOREA WILL BE DEPENDENT ON CANADA WHICH IN PAST HAD DIFFICULTY SUPPLYING OWN NEEDS, ALTHOUGH CANADIAN HEAVY WATER PRODUCTION NOW INCREASING.

E. POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO KOREA OF STANDARDIZATION IN REACTOR PROGRAM ARE GREATER RELIABILITY, HIGHER SAFETY MARGIN AND LOWER UNIT PRICE.

F. IN FLEDGLING NUCLEAR PROGRAM THERE IS CONSIDERABLE ADVANTAGE TO CONCENTRATING ON SINGLE TECHNOLOGY TO AVOID DILUTING SCARCE SPECIALIST MANPOWER RESERVES FOR BOTH OPERATING UTILITY AND GOVERNMENTAL GROUPS CHARGED WITH OVERSIGHT OF HEALTH, SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECTS OF NATIONAL PROGRAM.

2. WE ARE POUCHING FOR EMBASSY'S BACKGROUND INFORMATION A-167 WHICH PROVIDES ANALYSIS OF CANDU/LIGHT WATER REACTOR CONTEST IN ARGENTINA AND REBUTTALS TO ARGUMENTS FAVORING HEAVY WATER REACTORS.

3. IN ADDITION, JERRY HELFRICH, AEC SCIENTIFIC REPRESENTATIVE, TOKYO, WHO IS FAMILIAR WITH KOREAN SITUATION COULD PROVIDE USEFUL ADVICE. ALSO, MYRON KRATZER, SCIENTIFIC COUNSELOR, AMERICAN EMBASSY, TOKYO, WHO WAS AUTHOR OF A-167 AND FULLY FAMILIAR WITH ARGENTINE SITUATION, COULD PROVIDE ASSISTANCE. EITHER OF THESE EXPERTS MIGHT BE ABLE TO MEET WITH APPROPRIATE KOREAN OFFICIALS IF EMBASSY SEOUL CONSIDERS THIS DESIRABLE. RUSH

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